(c) The naxal affected States have been sanctioned India Reserve (IR) battalions to strengthen security apparatus at their level as also to enable them to provide gainful employment to the youth, particularly in the naxal areas. The initial cost of raising of !R Bns (Rs. 20.75 crore per Bn) is borne by the Central Government.

(d) The overall naxal situation in the country continues to be an area of serious concern. Till the end of June this year, while the number of naxal incidents declined by 12%, the resultant deaths increased by 16%.

Scrapping of Official Secrets Act, 1923

209. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Administrative Reforms Commission has recommended scrapping of the Official Secrets Act and inclusion of some of its safeguards in the National Security Act: and

(b) if so, whether Government have accepted the proposal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Necessary action has been initiated to process this recommendation.

Custodial deaths

210. SHRIMATI S.G INDIRA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that according to Amnesty International's annual report, the number of custodial deaths is increasing every year in India;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what are the steps being taken by Government to prevent custodial deaths;

(d) whether Government are considering to bring in any legislation to arrest custodial deaths; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?